

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 /009 R

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APPROVED BY: ARA/CAR:TJCHEAVNER

LA/BR:RJBALLANTYNE

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P 311931Z DEC 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL BELEM PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 305476

FOLLOWING REPEAT GEORGETOWN 2206 ACTION SECSTATE BRASILIA
BRIDGETOWN CARACAS PORT OF SPAIN KINGSTON PARAMARIBO 30 DEC 75.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 2206

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR BR GY

SUBJ: PRIMIN BURNHAM ALLEGES BRZAIL ADOPTING HOSTILE PLANS
TOWARDS GUYANA

REF: A. GEORGETOWN 2047, 2082; B. BRASILIA 10442 (NOTAL)

1. TOWARDS CLOSE OF MY CONNVERSATION DEC 26 WITH PM
BURNHAM AND FONMIN FRED WILLS, FORMER ASKED ME WHY
USG HAD NOT PROTESTED TO BRAZIL OVER ITS MANIFEST
POLICY OF ATTEMPTING TO INTERFERE IN GUYANA'S DOMESTIC
AFFAIRS BY VARIOUS ACTIONS, WHICH BY NOW ARE
GENERALLY LABELED AMONG GOG OFFICIALS AS QUOTE DESTABILIZING
UNQUOTE. I SAID FONMIN HAD SHARED HIS CONCERN WITH ME ON ONE OR TWO
OCCASIONS, INCLUDING REPORTS REGARDING TROOP AUGMENTATION ON
BRAZILIAN FRONTIER WITH GUYANA, AGITATION AMONG GUYANESE
AMERINDIANS, AND ANTI-GOG ARTICLES IN BRAZILIAN PRESS. I HAD ALSO
DISCUSSED SOME OF THESE REPORTS WITH MY BRAZILIAN COLLEAGUE.

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HOWEVER, I HAD MADE NO PROTEST TO BRAZILIAN COLLEAGUE, NOR

TO MY KNOWLEDGE HAD ONE BEEN MADE IN WASHINGTON OR BRASILIA, BECAUSE OUR INQUIRIES AND INVESTIGATION HAD FAILED TO COME UP WITH ANY CONFIRMATION OF THE REPORTS IN QUESTION. AS TO THE PRESS, I SAID THAT I HAD ALREADY INDICATED TO WILLS THAT ESTADO DE SAO PAULO WAS LEAST LIKELY OF ALL BRAZILIAN NEWS MEDIA TO LEND ITSELF TO A GOB PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN.

2. BURNHAM THEN REMARKED THAT SMALL NATIONS LIKE GUYANA CAN'T HOPE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES AGAINST SUPERPOWERS OR EVEN LARGER NEIGHBORS, BUT HE WAS TAKING STEPS TO MAKE SURE GUYANA WOULD GIVE GOOD ACCOUNT OF ITSELF, AND IT WAS ONLY NATURAL TO BE LOOKING FOR FRIENDLY SUPPORT IN OTHER QUARTERS. HE ASKED WHY USG HAD REFUSED TO SELL ARMS TO GUYANA. I SAID WE HAD JUST SOLD GOG QUANTITY OF PISTOLS THROUGH BRITISH CROWN AGENT. BURNHAM SAID HE MEANT REAL WEAPONS, SPECIFICALLY MODERN AUTOMATIC REFLES WHICH HE HAD HAD TO BUY ELSEWHERE. HE SAID REFUSAL HE MENTIONED WAS SOME YEARS AGO AND WAS BASED ON FACT GUYANA NOT IN OAS OR OTHERWISE COVERED BY DEFENSE TREATY. I SAID TREATY RELATIONSHIP USUALLY AFFORDED CREDITTERMS, AND SOME PRICE CONCESSIONS, BUT I WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY RESTRICTION ON STRAIGHT CASH PURCHASES, AT LEAST AS REGARDS GUYANA.

3. WE ARE PICKING UP INCREASING NUMBER OF INDICATIONS, BOTH OPEN AND COVERT, OF BURNHAM'S APPARENT BELIEF THAT BRAZIL IS ACTUALLY EMBARKED ON CAMPAIGN OF HOSTILITY TOWARDS GUYANA. IN DEDICATING COOPERATIVE VILLAGE DEC 14, HE DWELT ON THEME OF EXTERNAL THREAT AT SOME LENGTH, WITHOUT IDENTIFYING WHENCE THREAT EMANATING. HE SPELLED OUT MOTIVATION, #923;34, AS IDEOLOGICAL, I.E. SUCCESS OF GUYANA IN BUILDING SOCIALIST STATE ON SOUTH AMERICAN CONTINENT IS SEEN AS THREAT TO STABILITY BY CAPITALIST REGIMES. HE EXHORTED LISTENERS TO EXPECT TROUBLE ON THIS FRONT IN 1976 AND TO BE PREPARED TO DEFEND COUNTRY.

4. AT NOON RECEPTION DEC 29, SIR LIONEL LUCKHOO, FORMER GOG HICOM IN LONDON, LEADING BARRISTER AND CONFIDENT OF BORNHAM, TOOK ME ASIDE TO ASK ME ABOUT BRAZILIAN THREAT. HE SAID BURNHAM HAD JUST TOLD HIM BRAZIL IS MASSING TROOPS ON FRONTIER, SITUATION IS EXTREMELY THREATENING, AND HE WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH LUCKHOO. LUCKHOO ASKED ME WHAT I KNEW ABOUT THIS, AND I DREW CONFIDENTIAL

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ON REFTEL C, PLUS PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE TO REPLY THAT I HAD ABSOLUTELY NO RPT NO CONFIRMATION OF ANY MANEUVER OR TROOP MOVEMENTS BY BRAZILALONG GUYANESE FRONTIER AND THAT I COULDN'T FIND ANY LOGICAL EXPLANATION FOR PM'S CONCERN. I SAID QUITE FRANKLY I WAS LEFT TO WONDER WHETHER THERE MIGHT BE SOME DOMESTIC PROBLEM WHICH CALLED FOR DIVERSIONARY TREATMENT. LUCKHOO THANKED ME AND SAID HE WOULD LET ME KNOW IF HE GOT ANY FURTHER PARTICULARS.

5. ACTION REQUESTED AND COMMENT: WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION OR GUIDANCE WHICH BRASILIA MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE ON THIS SUBJECT. THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT ESCALATION SINCE EARLY DECEMBER IN THE INTENSITY OF WHAT WE EARLIER CALLED QUOTE MILD PARANOIA UNQUOTE OF BURNHAM AND WILLS ON BRAZIL. IN ABSENCE OF ANY INFORMATION TO GIVE CREDENCE TO GOG ALLEGATIONS, IT BEGINS TO LOOK MORE AND MORE AS THOUGH BURNHAM IS CONJURING UP AN EXTERNAL THREAT EITHER TO DISTRACT ATTENTION FROM A SERIOUS DOMESTIC PROBLEM (WHICH WE ARE EQUALLY UNABLE TO DISCOVER) OR ELSE TO MASK PREPARATIONS FOR INTRODUCING SOME UNPOPULAR MEASURE(S) (CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM MIGHT FIT THIS DESCRIPTION).
KRREBS
UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, POLITICAL SITUATION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: johnsorg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE305476
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ARA/CAR:TJCHEAVNER
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750451-1040
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975123/aaaaacmg.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 GEORGETOWN 2047, 75 BRASILIA 10442
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: johnsorg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUN 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <06 NOV 2003 by johnsorg>; APPROVED <06 NOV 2003 by johnsorg>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRIMIN BURNHAM ALLEGES BRZAIL ADOPTING HOSTILE PLANS TOWARDS GUYANA
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, BR, GY, (BURNHAM, L F S)
To: BELEM
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006